

AMENDMENT A - Marked-Up Version

1. An object authentication method comprising the following steps:

- (a) printing upon each of a plurality of objects each possessing a recognized creator an origin code component which is unique to said recognized creator of said plurality of objects;
- (b) printing upon each of said plurality of objects an authentication code component derived algorithmically from a base related to said origin code component each of which is unique with respect to every other said authentication code derived from said base related to said origin code component;
- (c) recording said origin code component in a computer memory registry together with related information pertaining to the recognized creator including the identity of the same;
- (d) recording in said registry each said authentication code component printed upon each of said plurality of objects for, and in a manner related to, said origin code component;
- (e) recording in said registry, in a manner related to each said authentication code component, an ownership code component including an ownership status which has at least two conditions each indicative of a type of ownership including that by the recognized creator of said plurality of objects initially and which condition is variable by authorized access to said registry to reflect transfer of ownership inclusive of declension of said ownership status to a condition indicating the type of ownership anticipated in a recognized chain of ownership types from creator to public as an indication of sale of an object bearing said origin and authentication code components by an entity recognized as being of the type of ownership indicated by the ownership status for said object;

whereby each said authentication code component may be verified as being a valid, algorithmically derived, authentication code component printed upon one of said plurality of objects possessing a single recognized creator, and the ownership status indicating the type of ownership recognized for each said authentication code component may be ascertained, both with reference to said origin and authentication code components in said registry.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT A - Marked-Up Version

12. (Amended) The authentication method of claim [11] 1 further including the step of printing a receipt of sales bearing the origin and authentication code components.

14. (Amended) The authentication method of claim [11] 1 wherein at least three different types of ownership status are utilized including creator and public and at least two declensions of ownership status are provided.

16. (Amended) The authentication method of claim [11] 1 further including the step of recording into said registry a secret ownership code subcomponent available only after declension of ownership status to public.